Indo-U.S.A. Agreement

Reg. No. B3092

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

VOL. XVI. No. 34 AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1952 TWO ANNAS

PATIL-MASHRUWALA CORRESPONDENCE

II

Shri Kishorlalbhai's Reply — His Vision of Future India

Bajajwadi, Wardha,
2-9-'52

My dear Dada Saheb,

I am sorry for having been so late in replying to your letter of the 5th ultimo. If my health and time had permitted I wanted to reply during some time last week. But I simply could not. In the meanwhile I tried to study the views of Shri Jugatram Dave, whose scheme you have mentioned in your letter. I also shared your letter with Shri Narhari Parikh and Vinobaji to ascertain how exactly they thought in this matter. Owing to the illness of Vinobaji and Damodardas Mundada I have not been able to obtain his comments.....

Now to come to the subject:

I Difficulties Facing Decentralization

1. Let me first of all admit the great difficulty which faces us, the advocates of decentralization. Theoretically, we draw the picture of a political and economic order consisting of independent village republics federating themselves into higher and higher unions, until we reach a federation embracing the whole country, and thence, in course of time, the whole world, — each higher union enjoying only such powers as its units agree to confer upon it. In that case the highest union would have the minimum of functions. This would be possible only if we had to commence our life after a complete chaos, with no Central, Provincial and other authorities at all in existence. But what we actually have is that we have in existence a fully empowered Central State, and partially but well-empowered Provincial States, and lower organizations can exercise only such powers and perform such functions as might be assigned to them by the Provincial States, with the sanction of the Central State. Hence, it is possible now for the smallest units to come into their own, (if violence and ultra-radical methods are to be avoided), only by inducing or bringing pressure upon the Central and Provincial authorities to divest themselves of as many of their powers as possible and restore them to the smallest practicable units.

2. But the process that has been going on (no doubt for historical causes) is the reverse. According to the ideal of the 'Welfare State', the State is increasingly made responsible for every item of an individual's needs — not only from birth to death — from conception to cremation. If we are to assume that the same historical process is destined to continue, in course of time, the U.N.O. will end in a World Government, in which even big countries like U.S., China, U.S.S.R., India etc. will function more or less like Class A States, and the sanction behind every one of them will be Force.

Centralized Welfare State

3. I must confess, I do not look upon this as an ideal to be aspired after. There might be some, who regard this to be an ideal worthy of man, and some who think that a process destined historically cannot be reversed by the efforts of dreamers of an opposite type; and that we must carry the present process to its logical end — namely, the institution of a very strong Central World Government controlled by the strongest group of its units. And this logical end will be achieved, as this whole process has hitherto developed, as a result of wars and violent revolutions.

4. If we are convinced that this is not a worthy ideal, and we definitely want to avoid wars, violent revolutions, and dictatorships either of the Fascist (Individual Capitalist) or of the Bolshevik (State Capitalist) types — India must abandon *this* ideal of the Welfare State. We must feel convinced that we must resist this end of humanity and that, if we will, we can do it, whatever Historian Determinists might say to the contrary.

5. We do want every person from the moment of conception till death to enjoy the objectives of the Welfare State. But if this can be done only by making him from birth to death something like an A, B, or C class prisoner of the State, under the outward semblance of democracy (and U.S.S.R. also regards itself to be a democracy of its own type), it is much better to live, as we have lived from the birth of humanity till now, in some sort of hard struggle for existence than be just comfortable, well-kept animals by a small powerful group of our own species.

6. If this is agreed, we must voluntarily and in a planned manner commence to vest the smallest units with progressively increasing

autonomous powers. I am aware that the small units are at present too weak and backward to know their own minds, and the how of it. But that does not mean that the Central authorities should plan for them and impose the plans upon them and ask them to execute them or create organizations for executing them. The authorities in the higher ladders should try to understand the inner yearnings of the smaller ones and if on account of their ignorance, short-sightedness and narrow-mindedness, there are any shortcomings from the point of view of the safety of the State, justice, equity, good conscience, welfare of the last man in the small unit, well-being of the nation as a whole etc., we should correct their ideas by advice, persuasion etc. If the Centre finds them obdurate and absolutely resistant to good ideas and broad-mindedness on a matter of an important moral principle, (for instance, communal and caste equality), it may in the last resort, refuse to co-operate with the small unit and leave it entirely to shift for itself until it feels that it itself is the sufferer, and that the insistence on a matter of principle was in its own benefit. But as a general rule, it should patiently guide them to the right goal.

Picture of Decentralized Society

7. So our first task should be to prepare each small unit to undertake the responsibility of being self-supporting, self-reliant, in as many matters as possible politically as well as economically. Let it be proclaimed, for instance, that at the end of five years — say, from 1st April 1958 — India will be divided into suitable firkas, each firka consisting of a townlet with villages within a radius of 5 to 10 miles of it; and it will be vested with the maximum of authority within its sphere; the authority will include its policing, defence against dacoits, judiciary, education, taxation etc.; it will frame its own Constitution, of which a few general forms suitable for different regions may be indicated. The firka must be self-sufficient and self-reliant in normal times in, at least, food, clothing, oil-seeds, housing, cattle, manure, building of roads etc. It should be liable to give only a stated part of its revenue for the maintenance of the higher units above it. It should be entitled to develop as many industries from the raw materials available to it as it can, and must see to it that there is no unemployment in the area.

8. The firka would be divided into village units, but on account of natural causes, the self-sufficiency of each village may not be quite complete. So I would take the firka to be the smallest republic. But the village units there have to be, with their Village Panchayats. A Village Panchayat must consist of its entire adult population, and not of its nominated or elected representatives. It must evolve its own way of ascertaining the general sense of the village and the way of executing it. In case of sharp division on matter of an intricate or controversial nature, the way of deciding may not be counting of votes, but reference to a trusted authority or individual, or even toss of the coin. The firka government will necessarily consist of representatives nominated or elected by the Panchayat. So ultimately the firka will be smallest full government vested with residuary powers. Each higher union will exercise only such powers as are assigned to it from below. The residuary powers will remain with the firka. Even the higher governments must not run on party government methods. Where there are radical and irreconcilable divisions, the opinion of the units should be obtained.

9. I feel that the party system government and the bureaucracy instituted on the British model does not suit the Indian way of life. It has killed talent, initiative and sensitiveness for ethical values and justice of the ordinary man; and legislators and even ministers have often become a useless burden on the public. India will fare better by a government made of representatives of the whole house, irrespective of party labels, party labels being not recognized officially. There should be no *whips*, or ordered voting, and no canvassing. A government will not resign because any of its propositions is disapproved, but will execute it in such form as the house decides. I understand that it is so in Switzerland. It will suit India better than the British model, which we have taken for granted at present.

10. This is my general picture of future India, and, on the same lines, of the World Federation. I have referrred to it here, because of its bearing on the land problem and the production of food.

II Migration to Other Continents

11. I feel that ultimately Indian — or for the matter of that Far East Asian — land and food problem cannot be solved in their own countries alone. Our people must get an opportunity of migrating to other continents — America, Africa, Australia etc. Africa and New Zealand, Fiji etc. made (as they feel now) 'mistake' of inviting Indians to settle there. Now they want to retrace those steps. Australia became forewarned and refuses immigration of coloured people altogether. America is also afraid of it. But it also realizes that the tide cannot be resisted for all time to come and desires to ward off the 'evil' as long as possible. Hence, its policy of keeping Asians into Asia by every method possible. "Increase your food, decrease your population, or get extirpated by long drawn out civil wars, but keep within your bounds; and we shall help you with funds for any of these purposes." This seems to be the guiding star of its policy. It also realizes that a continuous flow of poverty-stricken Asians into America must create in the long run a struggle for power there, and lead to some form of socialism, and curtailment of the standard of their own living. Russia is, to them, the arch-devil of the Socialist cult, and hence its dread of it.

III Mechanization Bound to Increase Unemployment

12. Our Agriculture and industries must be adjusted against this background. Whether, in either of them, large-scale and mechanized methods will always lead to increased production cannot be said with certainty. It will depend upon various factors. But what can be said with certainty about them is that they progressively reduce the number of human and animal workers formerly engaged in productive avocations, and in spite of all our efforts to create new industries and avenues of employment, the number of unemployed increases more rapidly than that of new industries, trades etc. It must be realized that new avenues of employment if not of a productive type, but of service type, however useful, are in the long run parasitic in their nature. Even if mechanized and large-scale methods succeed in producing large quantities of consumable articles, the simultaneous increase of large-scale unemployment results in progressively diminishing the purchasing power of the people. European countries thrived because they could capture so many markets of the world; they could also colonize elsewhere, and found empires. If the European countries, with their dense populations had found no outlet for their people and goods elsewhere, they would have come to graver ruin than China or India by their industrialization. Even then their cut-throat competition and rivalry was unable to solve the problems of unemployment, with the result that the greater the industrialization, the more intense and constant have been their wars until they have led to World Wars and genocides. Their prosperity has been comparatively short-lived.

13. We must take a lesson from their experience.

IV No Private Property

14. The Bhoodan Movement is based on the principle of "All land belongs to God". The ownership of a particular man on a particular plot is, ultimately, a limited ownership only. It is for the purpose of making him take utmost interest in his work, and put forth all his energy and talents in developing his holding. He works with love, but not necessarily for his own needs only. "All land belongs to God" is only a limited application of the principle अीशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् (All this is pervaded by God). That is not only land, but all that exists in the world and is produced by man, does not belong to him but to God, and he is entitled to take only his due share of it. The second half of the Mantra तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा: (Enjoy it by renunciation) follows the first as a matter of course. So ultimately private property of every type must come to an end, and so also rents, interest, profits etc. The Bhoodan Movement seeks to bring this about not by force — either of the State, or indirect coercive methods, or violent revolution — but by converting the largest possible number of propertied as well as unpropertied people to this creed. As it is, a majority of the people, even if they belong to the class of absolute have-nots are capitalists in embryo, and think in terms of private ownership, profits, wages etc.

V The Samashraya System Explained

15. My articles on the Samashraya system referred to in para 3 of your letter must be read in the light of this intermediate stage.

16. When I wrote those articles, the idea of Bhoodan Movement was not born, and so I spoke in terms of wages and dividends in accordance with their present ownership rights. But as I contemplated, that no worker on land — indeed, no family in a village, should be absolutely landless, I suggested the assignment of a minimum plot of land to every one for "hobby cultivation". The better term has been suggested by a friend: viz. "subsistence holding". It may not be full economic holding in your sense, because the cultivator will need other sources of income also. I also believe that agriculture or cattle-breeding alone should not be the only vocation of any one. Even where it provides an all-year-round employment, some industrial occupation (not necessarily for commercial purposes) must be associated with agriculture, and every artisan or industrial worker should be associated with agricultural occupation. The "subsistence holding" was thus meant for both village-artisans and agriculturists proper.

17. You are right (para 4) in saying that payment of dividends being the last item of distribution, would be only nominal (if at all) at least for some years. Indeed, it would disappear altogether when the principle of सबै भूमि गोपालकी (All land belongs to God) is brought into practice. At present, land reform legislation contemplates ceiling and bottom holdings, and also sub-tenancies. Hence I had to allow the idea of dividends. Even with improvement of agriculture, land will have to be allotted to new generations, and a part of it will have to come from the ceiling owners. So this item of paying dividends is only a residuary and intermediate possibility. Ultimately it must entirely disappear, and in no case should it have the shape of either Debentures, or Preference Share. "Mangroth" — the village which has donated all its lands to Vinoba — may well become the model of land distribution.

18. The word 'wages' in my articles really has a meaning wider than the usual one. It is more akin to the monthly withdrawals of a partner of a firm against his share than to a wage. In a partnership consisting of sleeping partners, working partners with different investments of capital, and working partners without contribution of capital, the last two draw regular monthly allowances at an agreed rate, the sleeping partner gets interest plus a share in the profits. He generally does not draw in the middle of a year. At

(continued on p. 293)

HARIJAN

Oct. 18 1952

INDO-U.S.A. TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT

[Late Shri K. G. Mashruwala wrote the following as a foreword to Shri S. Ramabhai's booklet *Agreement or Slavery Bond*? published by the Hindustani Culture Society, 145 Muthiganj, Allahabad. The question touched by Shri K. G. M. in it is much more serious than is generally understood at present. It is hoped the foreword reproduced below will draw the attention of all serious-minded people, particularly those who are associated with the implementation of the T. C.A., to the great issues involved in this Agreement with the U.S.A.

2-10-'52 — M. P. D.]

Often a transaction of public event, which does not immediately create a great sensation in the public and is practically neglected even by the general politician or economist proves later to have been the turning point in a nation's history. It plants a weed, which after some time, grows rapidly spreading itself far and wide, going deep into the soil and smothering everything in its vicinity. It looks harmless and even pleasant in the beginning, but ultimately when it begins to exert the influence on its surroundings, it would already have become too late and too difficult to get out of its entanglements.

The Agreement signed between U. S. and India on 5th January, 1952 has appeared to Shri Suresh Ramabhai and many of us a transaction of this type.

The Government of India having entered into it with great deliberation and evidently on the advice of experts, is naturally completely satisfied with its achievements. Not a few of the leading dailies and economic organs of industrialists have also given it their blessings.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's deep concern for bringing about the economic regeneration of India at the quickest possible pace is well known. He is impatient with lethargic people who are easily satisfied with a little advance here and a little achievement there. He has great faith in modern technical science and wants it to be fully employed in India for the economic advancement of the country. He wants to see India undertake and complete projects as grand as any in any part of the world. There is no doubt that India is capable of doing all this. Who does not know her past achievements and her position as the leading nation of the world for centuries in every field of life? We are descendants of the same people, on the whole intellectually well-developed, and given adequate opportunity, guidance and means, there is no reason why we may not achieve as much again.

For more than two centuries past, enormous wealth has been drained away from India into foreign lands, and she has been bled white. It is not possible, Pandit Nehru and many others probably feel, that India can rebuild her prosperity with the aid of her own resources. At any rate it cannot be done at anything more than a snail's pace. If we can obtain, by way of either loan or gift, funds or materials needed by us for developing our country, consistently with our national independence and self-respect, no sense of either timidity or vanity on our part should prevent us from seeking, negotiating, or accepting such aid. There is nothing intrinsically wrong or immoral in it. People enter into partnership and loan agreements every day in their private life and still retain their individuality and equality of status. Whether doing so will put a person in a position of subordination to the other party in matters outside the sphere of agreement depends upon the quality of self-confidence possessed by him. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, perhaps, feels that it would be cowardly on the part of India to reject aids or loans undoubtedly needed by her merely from the fear that the acceptance of such aids may render her incapable of preserving her independence in national or international affairs. Pandit Nehru has more than once shown his independence of spirit, and why should he think that any Government succeeding him will not be able to do so equally well? No doubt, there is some risk, but none can achieve much without risks.

This is theoretically a valid attitude. But it is not in conformity with the actual experience we have in the private life of individuals or the political history of nations. On the contrary, the general experience is that a debtor becomes subservient to the creditor in every manner. He loses all initiative and freedom to decide his course of action. The consequences of disobedience to the will of the creditor or the benefactor are so grave that he does not dare to take the risk.

A study of the Agreement of 5th January, 1952 and of some of the secondary agreements that have since been signed in pursuance of it, shows that the risk to which India has become exposed through these is so grave that the Agreement may well prove to be virtually a bond of slavery. I need not repeat what those risks are, as they have been well described by Shri Suresh Ramabhai in his booklet. The risks are not only economic but also political and psychological. The psychological risk that I refer to is the possibility that at least two opposite types of complexes might be created in the people: that we cannot live without the goodwill and friendship of America; and that (as a strong reaction against the first) we must run into the Communist camp in order to liberate ourselves from the first. The very thing, which is sought to be avoided by U.S., might happen, with greater impact by agreements of this type. The drama of China and Korea might be re-enacted in India.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's sincerity of purpose is not to be doubted. He has confidence in

himself, confidence in the innate capacities of our people, and faith in the role which India must play in future as a great nation of the world. He believes in the unity of the world; in the abolition of war and in peace. He believes that this is possible only through non-violence and not through armaments. That he cannot run away from the war machine in the immediate present is a concession to the realities of the situation and not an acceptance of the proposition that peace can be saved by piling and perfecting destructive weapons. But simply because he has to make these concessions and cannot face up to all the implications of his faith, he does not want to run away from his duty.

On the economic programme, frankly, it seems to me that Panditji's thinking is not quite clear. He does not love centralization and regimentation; but he appears to me to have almost a superstitious faith in the power of the machine, of scientific appliances and of the economy of mass production. Production by the *charkha*, village industries and bullock plough methods, appears to him, perhaps, as of too rudimentary a nature to be considered seriously by the Government of a great Republic, with a population of 36 crores of people. Hence, he is indeed earnest to industrialize the country. He does not seem to agree with those who think that war and large-scale industrialization are almost inseparable companions.

Due to this attitude of his; he is constantly attracted towards gigantic schemes, and has launched so many of them. Some of them have been disastrous failures, and in some others, the Government has been cheated by its own officers, advisers, technicians and others. One of the greatest and costliest lessons of the schemes has been that we have proved ourselves to be too much depraved in moral character and wanting in love for our country. Other considerations apart, our national regeneration cannot be achieved merely by heavy economic reconstruction. The moral reconstruction of our country on solid foundations is even more important and basic than economic reconstruction. The latter should follow step by step in the wake of the former.

But, great though the losses have been on account of failures and dishonesty in connection with various schemes, they are most of them only isolated transactions. The present agreement is a continuous process. It is virtually a charter to U. S. to establish herself in India, first as a trading concern, and then as India's political boss. The Government of India has agreed to place at the disposal of U. S. all its administrative machinery and to become her advertising agency. U. S. officers, employers etc. will be allowed to live in India and move and mix with the people of India without being subject to even civil laws of India. Who can prevent them from propagating any political or social views they please, and creating factions in India? The next elections might well be a rivalry among U.S. sponsored, U.S.S.R. sponsored, and purely Indian parties.

I am in entire agreement with the principle that the whole world is one; that, after all, it is but human and natural that one section of mankind should help another in times of need; that he who has much should share his surplus with him who has little; and that both the giver and the receiver should feel blessed. Grand achievements and scientific advance should not be inconsistent with peace. But it is clear that motives of U. S. in aiding Europe and Asia are not so altruistic as are needed for such an attitude. They are frankly made for organizing an anti-Communist front. Equally similar is the attitude of the Communists. These two are at daggers drawn against each other, and each tries to spread its tentacles over other peoples for their own ends, and not out of any brotherly love. So long as this is the attitude of these two ambitious countries and their collaborating nations, we must rebuild our country by our own efforts. It is better to be slow in our progress, than to put up a facade of progress, when behind it there is only a state of bankruptcy that may lead to civil strife or international warfare.

Wardha, 9-6-'52 K. G. MASHRUWALA

PATIL-MASHRUWALA CORRESPONDENCE

II

(continued from p. 291)

the end of the year all share the profits, if any, after reckoning the interest on capital. In case of loss, usually the working partner without investment does not bear it. He is a sharer in profits only. The monthly allowances allowed to be drawn by the working partners, I have called here wages. Since they will be *full*, that is sufficient to pay their maintenance bills, it does not matter if there is nothing left to divide. The actual workers will not have starved in any case. And if sleeping partners cannot get anything, they must suffer it, or become active workers, or part with their interests.

I shall now deal with some of the paragraphs of your letter in serial order.

19. Para 5 — Whether it is Co-operative Society or a Panchayat, I do not contemplate its management through a Board of Directors. There might be an Executive Committee, but it will not issue directions to be acted upon by the members or raiyats, but it will be its duty to carry out and see to the implementation of the wishes of the general body of the Society or the Village Panchayat. The authority must vest in the general voters, and not in a few people. The Managing Body may advise, but it will not decide.

20. (a) Para 6 — No amount of increased production and opening of avenues for employment in new industries will solve the problems of unemployment and poverty, if our economic order is based on rents, interest, profits, transportation charges etc. Ultimately all wages form part of the cost price, and the greater the wages the higher

the cost price, and so too the higher becomes the sale-price. The result is that the wages can never be more than the selling price of essential articles, and the demand for rise in salaries can never end. If, to add to this, you carry on mechanization to a perfection, the number of unemployed must always increase. The only way out is liquidation of commercialism i.e. abolition of rents, interest and profits.

(b) Secondly, large-scale industrialization and militarization are twins. Under commercialism one needs the other. Hence, I do not see the rosy picture which you have raised in this paragraph. With every improvement in technical science, the military expenditure will increase disproportionately.

21. Para 7 — I hope your attention has been drawn to the criticism of Vinoba against cultivation on simple wage system. Apart from the cultural drawbacks of wage-system, the impossibility of assuring a really full wage in a commercialized system, is another objection. Whether it is State Capitalism or Private Capitalism, the larger the enterprise, the greater is the number of administrative staff — who takes no part in production and is better paid than the actual workers. So the cost price always rises, and the wages are never enough to purchase for all the needs of the labourer. The distance between the least paid and the best paid continually increases. It has become so even in Russia. So even if capitalism is allowed, the salvation of a thickly populated country like ours lies in strictly limiting the scope of large-scale agriculture and industrialization. Where they are indispensable, they should be run on utmost economical lines, i.e. on no profits no loss basis, with very moderate salaries, without commissions, director's fees etc.

22. In the field of agriculture large-scale cultivation should be undertaken to bring new areas under cultivation only, and with a view to ultimately make them available for landless peasants working on them. I also have in mind some areas, where machinery might be employed with very great advantage. For instance, in the hilly tracts of the Himalayas and other mountainous regions to level down rocks and prepare larger terraces than those made by men. There, mechanized methods might well give greater employment to men than now, and it may be necessary to divert labour from the plains to the top. Land development and irrigation projects with the help of heavy machinery has, I believe, a great field in mountainous region.

23. Unless you are able to get a "New India" or "New Asia" on some other continent, large-scale cultivation will make the unemployment problem intenser day by day. On our own land, we may manage to live decently only on a moderate standard of living and through decentralized methods of production and distribution, moderately mechanized methods, and by associating agriculture and industries together.

24. (1) Para 8 (i) (a). The difference lies in the methods. The present-day co-operatives are more or less joint-stock companies on a small scale. The Panchayats also, as contemplated by you, are like a board of directors elected by the members by counting of votes, and more often than not, on political party or communal lines. Even thereafter they will decide matters by majority among themselves, and not always unanimously. And after their election, they will be playing the role of masters, and issue injunctions, which their electors must obey. Both in politics and economics, we are building up a democracy of electing masters, instead of "ministers" (i.e. who render service), with an irrevocable authority for a number of years. Experience shows that this has led to discord and bitter feelings in all institutions, including even our Sanghs. The evil of party groups (पक्षबाजी) based not even on principles but, on personal or family and clan rivalries, has been a long-standing curse of our villages. It is party-politics on a miniature scale, but with all the cunning and ingenuity of large-scale intrigues. We must build institutions on lines, which will restore amity and concord and not create fanatics of political and ideological dogmas. We should attempt to discover methods of correcting this evil.

24. (2) (b) The Planning Commission's proposal is that with 2/3rds majority, the remaining 1/3rd may be coerced to join the Village Management scheme. I would say thus: You might disenfranchise all those, who are well-known bad characters. But for the remaining, effort should be made to take decisions unanimously, or at least *nem con.* If a counting has to be made, there should be a majority of at least, say, 80 to 85 per cent, and if there is a matter of principle or conscience involved on the issue, no one should be coerced to accept an arrangement not acceptable to him on that ground. He may be allowed to go his way.

24. (3) (ii) (a) Consolidation of Holdings, i.e. trying to give such owners as have their fields scattered hither-thither in a compact area by effecting exchanges with neighbours — is one way. There is no objection to resort to this method, wherever it is possible and necessary.

24. (4) (b) Creating natural co-operation among neighbouring holders for purposes of agricultural operations. Such co-operative work does not depend upon regular co-operative societies.

24. (5) (c) The term "co-operation" loses its meaning when "co-operatives" become "competitives" and just a firm of retail shopkeepers, entering into rivalry with other similar co-operatives or private shops. In the issue of licences, permits, supplies, grants, loans etc., Government follows a general policy of preferring co-operatives to private organizations. Since Government itself is run on party lines, this has led to rival co-operatives, one favoured by the party in power and the other trying to checkmate it. To remedy

this one way would be to insist on having only one multi-purpose co-operative in one unit, to eliminate all private dealers in distribution, and to make membership in the co-operative society compulsory for every householder. Both Vinoba and Naraharibhai have disapproved of this, and for good reasons. "co-operative" loses its meaning when it becomes compulsory and becomes incapable of giving sufficient opportunity for original talent to shine. Hence my feeling is:

24. (6) (i) That co-operatives, whether in selling, purchasing, or distributing, should be restricted to carry on their operations for and among their members only. They must not become commission agents or middlemen between non-members on the one hand and Government or the world on the other. Their purchases must be for the needs of their members only, and not for sale to the public. Their sales to the public must be confined to their own productions. Permits, grants, loans and other helps should be given to them for proper distribution among their members only. The natural advantages arising out of joint purchases etc. should be sufficient incentive to co-operation. As long as the urge is not from within, let the people choose their own way of life, and Government treat co-operative societies and individual applicants or private dealers on the same footing, except that the latter two should have placed on them a ceiling limit.

24. (7) (ii) Barring very small holdings — holdings smaller than even the size indicated by Vinoba — all holdings do generally require some outside help at irregular intervals during the monsoons in various field operations. The members of the family by themselves are not able to cope with all the work of sowing, weeding, reaping etc. which has to be done at the right moment without loss of time. This raises the issue of outside labourers. Where are these labourers to come from if every peasant labourer is to be a self-cultivator, it is asked. Subject to correction as regards figures of acreage, my idea is this:

(a) Holders of between say 3 to 15 acres, should perform (and I believe they do) these operations by mutual co-operation. They would fix their own terms and turns.

(b) I regard holdings of less than 3 acres as coming under the category of "subsistence holdings". I have said that every one, even artisans of full time occupations, and seasonal occupations, should have such holdings. They will be even less than one acre, but may be upto three, or if the family is large, or the soil inferior, even larger.

In addition to work on their own plot, they would also find sufficient time and need to work for wages on larger holdings — i.e. those above 15 acres. If the owners of large holdings will lend their ploughs, bullocks etc. to carry out some of the major operations of their small holdings, they would get even more leisure, and would be better workers still. It will be co-operative *cum* wages. If their small holdings, are in the neighbourhood of and, better still, adjoining the larger holdings, it will be as good an arrangement as that secured by consolidated holdings, and more convenient. The Adivasis of the Surat District had a tradition of choosing a landless son-in-law for their daughter. The son-in-law was given a small plot of land for his own cultivation, and he also worked as a labourer on his father-in-law's fields. This was a good way of sharing one's land with the landless. This principle should be extended and improved upon.

(c) The registered farms and village management schemes create a class of absentee landlords, technicians, managers, supervisors, foremen, and a staff of workers. They perform no physical labour themselves, and still their emoluments are bound to be greater than those who do physical labour. In fact, these are even worse and more parasitic class of middlemen, than those who do the work of retail distributors, brokers and commission agents, — given equal honesty in the dealings of both classes. The latter class has to work harder and boss less than the former as a whole, and their way of living is not quite so different from the rest of the community, as that of the administrator class. In the society envisaged by us, there should be none, who is exempt from physical labour, — except for physical reasons i.e. ill-health, want of limbs, old age, infancy etc. Let it be understood very definitely that it is impossible even by magic to banish unemployment and ensure welfare to every one, in a system which presupposes the existence of rents, interest, profits, large-scale transports, administrative departments, modern military defence, and other non-physical workers. If this is further accompanied with ever increasing mechanization of work, in a country with abundant man-power and comparatively a small market outside, instead of going towards welfare we shall proceed towards concentration camps and large-scale man-slaughter as in Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

24. (8) (iii) Hence, we must propagate and work for uniting the whole village into, if possible, one joint family. If not one let it be a few. Say, units of about 50 to 100 families each. They must put all their lands and all their manufactures, and gains from every source into a common till. Whether some individuals thereof work as artisans, labourers, managers, or even are engaged in trades, services and outside the village; they should bring all their gains in the common till, and all should share in them as in a coparcenary. You know that a joint Hindu family unit is joint in food, worship and estate. Next to it is one separate in food, but joint in worship and estate, and the last is that of being joint in estate only. When it separates in food, each draws from the common till what it needs for maintenance. For convenience, its amount may be fixed according to a budget. The wage or salary in the

samashraya system proposed by me is just this withdrawal fixed for convenience. It may be in kind, cash or both according to convenience. The distinction between joint property and self-acquired property should be abolished. But this will be regarded, at present, as a reactionary idea. We have been for more than two generations working for the dissolution of the joint family; and yet the essence of community life and the goal of community projects should be this. If you call this Communism; it is Sarvodaya Communism.

25. Para 9 (pp. 4 to 6 of your letter). I think it is unnecessary to say anything specifically on these paragraphs, after the foregoing. If it is conceded that it is possible to have intensive cultivation through both large-scale and small-scale agriculture and equal results can be obtained and employment can be provided in both, why should we complicate matters and also disturb the psychological satisfaction of the small-scale holder? Let us work upward through what obtains at present for bringing about greater production and more equal distribution. The problem of distribution should not be separated from that of production. Regarding compensation I endorse Vinoba's views. The Bombay Tenancy Amendment Bill as recently framed was a good measure in regard to the fixing of price and payment by easy instalments. I do not know in what form the Bill has been ultimately passed.

26. Para 10. I do not think I need go into a detailed discussion about the pros and cons of land distribution. We have to face the realities of the wave, which has pervaded the whole world, and which is, fundamentally, morally justified. People cannot accept the present inequality of possession. Even if, as those who argue against distribution urge, it might lead to fall in production and to further hardships, let the risk be taken. Necessity is the mother of invention. I have indicated in para 22 the field for employing methods of large-scale production with up-to-date machinery. Let the Government open up uncultivated reclaimable lands and create new table-lands in mountainous regions, and work upon them with up-to-date methods for some years, and then distribute them to the persons who have worked under them on suitable terms. But private ownerships over large areas, are not to be tolerated by an awakened peasantry. So proceed towards their liquidation quickly, else it might be too late. If it is done early, the landlords might save something. If it is late, they might lose all. Please do not take this as a politician's warning, but as a dispassionate friend's reading of the situation. Academic discussions about how much land a man needs will not help us much.

27. Para 11. It does not matter much if the Village Co-operative Management does not materialize for 15 or 20 years yet. But it will be possible to make beginnings now if there are good workers, as in Mangroth. It can also be initiated in new colonies.

28. Para 12-13. Yes. I believe I have sufficiently discussed this in the above paragraph.

29. Para 14. Shri Narharibhai has mentioned a few industrial occupations which have to go with agriculture. They are dairy, spinning and weaving, soap-making, gur-making, *ghani* etc. Some of these would have to be organized on a co-operative basis. But when I speak of industries, I consider them in two aspects: one, as providing them as additional source of income in addition to self-sufficiency; and two, as saving their out-of-pocket expenses; spinning and weaving upto a certain stage; coir-making, paddy-husking, grinding, dairy, is primarily for self-sufficiency, i.e. for saving their expenditure; but they can also give them supplementary income. But cloth-weaving, bread, ghee, biscuits, *poha*, apiary, fruit, poultry, gur, sugar, unrefined oil etc. are agricultural industries catering for city people also. I think there can be many others. If it is settled that cities should receive all agricultural produce in a form ready for direct consumption to the largest extent possible, all such industries should be organized in villages themselves, or in the firka.

30. Agriculture is not likely to be an all-year round full-time occupation for at least 25 years next, for the simple reason that a great part of it will have to depend upon rain water only. Where you have sufficient irrigation, the necessity of providing rest to the soil will require every land to be kept fallow for a period by turns. And when I say agriculture should be married to handicrafts and village industries, I mean that every agriculturist should take some part in industrial work, and every artisan should take some part in agriculture; and let me go further and say that every clerical worker must take some part in both.

31. One more suggestion before I end this long epistle. In my opinion if we abandon all other parts of community projects and concentrate on creating every type of irrigating facility from small or deep wells and culverts to biggest canals — for five or ten years, in every part of the country, and leave the rest to the people, we shall have done a great work.

32. I wish I had compressed this in a smaller space, but if I were to recast it now it will need rewriting the whole. So please excuse me for its length and the inordinate delay.

Yours sincerely,
K. G. MASHRUWALA

CONTENTS PAGE

PATIL-MASHRUWALA CORRESPONDENCE — II .. 289
INDO-U.S.A. TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT .. K. G. Mashruwala 292

Subscription Rates — Inland: One year, Rs. 6; Six months, Rs. 3; Foreign: One year, Rs. 8 or 14 s. or $ 2.
Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad 9.